



Media Sector Development Working Group

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CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF MEDIA DEVELOPMENT IN THE AGENDA 2030 - THE VOICES OF THE MEDIA DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

Authors

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Abstract

In the last decades, professional media has been identified as a transformative leading force to induce development at multiple levels. The input that media can have on educational and health-related projects, the contribution of journalists to give a voice to the “non-heard” or the so-called ‘watchdog’ role on governments and institutions -just to mention a few structures- have been some of the aspects highlighted to refer to the potential of media to advance towards more prosperous, stable and democratic societies.

This rationale has positioned media development interventions in the global agenda particularly after the mid-1990s. At present, under the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals media development is also included in the Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

Target 10 of SDG 16 refers to “Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms” as an intimate component of the process to achieve accurate, impartial and media. Freedom of the press and the right to information is considered in that Goal as something crucial to sustainable development.

However, the global climate change emergency and the traditional reluctance from governments in developing nations to facilitate media development pushes, have diminished investments of donors to media development. This paper intends to identify what are the challenges and opportunities of media development together with the needs of this discipline in the coming years to further expand and allow the media contribute to the Agenda 2030 in full.

The research developed in this paper has been based in an unprecedented consultation exercise involving all international media development organizations (of multilateral nature like UNESCO, from the NGO field like Internews and those of academic basis like university departments). With more than 100 participants, the goal of this consultation has been to bring the voice of these organizations that have lead media development efforts across the Globe and to identify not only the challenges faced but the opportunities ahead and how to capitalize upon those.

This paper is not only a compilation of views and experiences. It also has a pragmatic angle: it aims at being considered an advocacy tool to address donors and multilaterals on the need to continue enhancing support to media development as key catalyst to achieve the Agenda 2030 in all its dimensions.

Submission ID

1709

Digital rhetoric, fake news & political polarization: A case study of Digital media in Naya Pakistan**Authors**

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Abstract

The importance and growing influence of SNS (Social Networking Sites) cannot be ignored and has given audience an opportunity to consume everyday news. In this paper I investigate that how the shift to digital news has impacted on political behavior of voters in Naya Pakistan. I research about the recent trends of news consumption and distribution pattern of news on digital platform Facebook. I closely analyse the news content online, using theory of digital rhetoric by Richard A. Lanham and connect it to various scholarly ideas around digital rhetoric. I argue in this paper that despite control or regulation of news, the rise of fake news and propaganda schemes is increasing. I use discourse analysis as my methodology to discuss the mechanism or techniques of power involved in creating a desired political narrative. I also discuss that the Echo chambers are challenging the alternative political rhetoric and has resulted in increased political polarization on online platforms in Pakistan. I also observe that powerful political elites are relying on digital media as a medium to orchestrate debates through controlled channels of information thus hijacking digital rhetoric. I use texts, pictures, videos and memes to analyse digital rhetoric. Some of the findings include increased political polarization, media bias and control over digital narrative. The "Public Rhetoric" is redefined with misinformation used in news and has created a misrepresentation of ideas as collective ideas.

Key Words: Digital media, Digital Rhetoric, Political Polarization, Fake News, Propaganda, Media Bias, Control

Submission ID

2699

For democratic and participatory governance of media and public communication. The participatory state institutions created in Latin America between 2000 and 2015**Authors**

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Abstract

Historically, Latin American communication policies have been captured by economic and political elites (Fox and Waisbord, 2002; Márquez and Guerrero, 2014). This implies enormous inequality during the policies making processes because civic organizations do not participate (Graziano, 1988; Segura and Waisbord, 2016). These policies have resulted in hyper-concentrated and commercial media systems, with production centralized in few urban areas, and sustained by advertising and government benefits; non-existent or poor public media; and illegal or restricted popular media. (Becerra and Mastrini, 2017) Besides, there are gag laws that criminalize defamation, slander and insult; secrecy practices of governments and companies; and violence against press workers. (Loreti and Lozano, 2014) Therefore, the public sphere reproduces existing social, economic, political, cultural, religious, gender, sexual orientation and/or generation inequalities (Linares, Segura and others, 2016).

Meanwhile, the communication rights are necessary condition for the exercise and expansion of other civil, political and social rights. Therefore, the democratization of communication is essential for social and state democratization. (Mata, 2006; Fraser, 2006)

During the first 15 years of the 21st century, there were unprecedented state and social activism in communication in the region. Many laws were reformed and, in most cases, it was done with citizen participation. These processes implied, to a certain extent, the passage from elite captured communication policies to participatory ones. (Segura and Waisbord, 2016)

In these new communication laws, civil society achieved the creation of state institutions with citizen participation for the debate, definition, implementation and control of communication policies. Thus, they aimed to institutionalize the social participation and impact on these policies and to avoid or limit their capture by the elites. In Mexico, Ecuador, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, countries with diverse characteristics and which went through different political processes in these years, most of the new laws created advisory councils, commissions and ombudsmen.

Although there are some analyses of its functioning (Linares, 2014 and 2017; Segura, 2015 and 2018; Retegui, 2017; Sáez Baeza, 2020) and its impact on media systems (Segura, Linares and others, 2018), comprehensive and comparative studies have not yet been carried out.

The problem is: To what extent did the participatory state institutions created by the audiovisual communication, telecommunications, and access to information laws sanctioned with social participation between 2000 and 2015 in Mexico, Ecuador, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, succeed (or not) in enabling the impact of civic organizations in the policy making processes and in avoiding or limiting their capture by political and economic elites?

Our argument is as follows: The participatory state institutions created by communication laws sanctioned with social participation in Mexico, Ecuador, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay between 2000 and 2015 did not succeed in ensuring citizen impact on communication policies, but remained subsumed within party negotiations and/or political alliances dependent on social general disputes. This prevented them from facing, with a certain autonomy, the resistance of government and

business elites to the reforms. However, they did manage to carry out some initiatives that circumstantially limited or suspended the elite capture of communication policies.

Submission ID

2790

Remaining in Poverty? The Construction of Poverty Reduction in Africa Media

Authors

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Abstract

Since the year of independence in 1960, many countries on the African continent have experienced decades of development and progress in many aspects. Since the beginning of the 21st century, with the revival of the African countries' economy, regional integration of African countries, and international affairs in developing countries where the position and action of ability obtained a very huge enhancement. It has become a consensus of many African countries that the era of independent African agenda-setting is approaching, and it is no longer in the history of the "edge" or "the hopeless continent". As the overall African political and economic situation stabilizes, the continent is gradually changing. The progress made in the socio-economic, political, cultural and security situations in Africa has become an indisputable fact. However, rapid economic development has not brought a commensurate external image to Africa. Negative news about political turmoil, ethnic conflicts and frequent wars in Africa is still frequently reported, and it is not uncommon for the public to associate Africa with poverty, wars and diseases. Some media reports still retain the original reporting framework. This is closely related to the dominant position of Western mainstream media and the relatively weak African media. With the continuous development of African media, local media have gradually mastered the right to report and present African voices on different media platforms.

Based on concerns of the development of African countries, this study aims to provide the perspective of African media on how they construct the poverty reduction through the analysis of aid and assistance column reported by *AllAfrica* website by using framework analysis and content analysis to uncover representations of development issues in African media and the development theories that underpin these reports. There are 7833 reports from 2015 to 2019 in aid and assistance column. By analysing the frequency, sources, topics and development theories of the reports, this study shows that the reported frequency is relatively average, but it goes up with big events. Generally speaking, the topics of reports are centred on aid. However, apart from health issues like Ebola and AIDS, the disasters like flood, drought and hunger are also main topics of the reports. Most of the sources of the reports are from African countries, while some others are from Reuters and Guardians. There is a new discourse system called "beyond money and aid" in Africa. The

countries which developed well in recent decades want to pursue equal trade instead of aid. Behind these reports, the development theories are changing. In addition to Modernization Theory and the Attachment Theory, these African countries are creating their own theories based on what they are trying to do now.

Submission ID

3394

Proximity Radio Stations: Sustainability or Pragmatic Viability?

Authors

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Abstract

Our paper addresses critical questions in the media development field, namely: how are local media houses achieving sustainability, and what does sustainability mean in practice? We draw on findings from eight case studies of ‘proximity’ (local) radio stations in Uganda and Zambia, investigating multiple dimensions of their operations and situating our analysis within the broader political, economic and regulatory contexts. We look at the sources and sizes of revenue generated by apparently successful local broadcasters who are withstanding a multitude of pressures including dwindling media assistance support, shrinking freedom of expression, increased competition, and inefficient and limited advertising markets.

We find that from a radio manager or owner’s point of view it is a matter of achieving a tripartite balance. Firstly, navigating political and commercial interests without losing editorial integrity; secondly, making money without sacrificing public service values; and thirdly, serving - and ideally expanding - audiences without compromising quality content.

Radio stations, even the bigger long-established ones, deploy a range of survival strategies to remain on air and operate effectively. Professional management and some degree of political connection or protection are important factors. Commercial sources of income are key and include advertisements, local announcements, and other ‘paid for’ content such as sponsored talk shows that feature paying guests from NGOs, government departments and political parties

However, advertising markets are limited in size, unsegmented and unsophisticated, which to some extent reflects the limitations of available audience research and the lack of negotiating power of media outlets operating in crowded marketplaces. Demonstrably large reach is therefore important for tapping national-level advertisers. We conclude that ‘small is generally NOT beautiful’ and radio stations often try to expand audience size to survive while trying to retain a sense of closeness – proximity - to their community. Stations are also refining their marketing strategies and increasingly

diversifying into non-media-related activities: for example renting out premises and equipment. Measures to address cashflow problems and make cost-savings include recruitment of volunteers.

We suggest that media outlets could more clearly signpost independent content from sponsored programmes to retain journalistic integrity and maintain a healthy balance between the two; and also to make greater use of research to understand their audiences and better target potential clients. The media assistance community could do more to understand the pressures stations are under, and, instead of expecting partners to strive for an absolute 'gold-standard' of financial sustainability and rigorous editorial independence, to support them to achieve a more pragmatic form of viability.

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3472

The Colorado Sun case: a bet for digital, quality, community and ethical journalism

Authors

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Abstract

The deep changes provoked by the Internet and the irruption of digital technologies is one of the three main causes that converge in the serious crisis that the conventional mass media is currently going through (Anderson, Bell & Shirky, 2015; Blumler & Kavannagh, 1999; Jarvis, 2014; Sunstein, 2002).

The other two, related to the first and also to each other, are the drop-in newspaper readership and income, as well as the progressive decline in mass media public confidence. Since then, there have been many attempts to find formulas to overcome the multidimensional crisis that questions an entire business model that worked seamlessly during the second half of the 20th century.

In this context, The Colorado Sun is a highly relevant example. This newspaper project is characterized by digital publication, a commitment to high-quality content, and a strong desire for community presence, which in this case is both the city of Denver and the U.S. state of Colorado. The Colorado Sun was founded in 2018 by journalists from the Denver Post and, from the beginning, opted for integration into the Civil media platform, which uses blockchain as a technological base.

Our research aims to analyse how and to what extent the Colorado Sun represents a significant and hopeful alternative to the crisis facing the conventional journalism model. The methodology is focused on the analysis of the mechanisms related to the quality and accountability of the digital newspaper, with attention also to its self-regulation and the relationship with its readers.

The preliminary results show that, in the case of The Colorado Sun, the use of blockchain is limited to the traceability of its content and to the integration of the newspaper into the Civil platform governance system, although blockchain allows for other functions related to journalism and communication (Al-Saqaf & Picha Edwardsson, 2019; Ivanksis, 2018).

Among other aspects, The Colorado Sun also stands out for the establishment of a double deontological parameter, as its journalists are subject to both their own ethical code and that of the so-called Civil Constitution. As for the business model, The Colorado Sun, which in its first year reached 2.7 million users (The Colorado Sun, 2019), avoids advertising for the moment and is in the process of building a sustainable model that respects independence thanks to the support of a growing subscriber base.

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